

MINUTES OF THE **MEETING OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE** HELD ON **WEDNESDAY 8th SEPTEMBER 2021** AT 7.00 P.M. AT NEWTON'S PLACE, 43 WOLBOROUGH STREET, NEWTON ABBOT

PRESENT: Councillor D Corney-Walker (Chairman) Presiding
Mrs K Crout (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors P Bullivant D Howe
Mrs C Bunday (Dep Mayor) R Jenks
C Davieson Mrs A Jones
A Hall M Joyce (Mayor)
M Hocking M Ryan

Councillor in attendance: Mrs L Sheffield

In attendance: Phil Rowe – Town Clerk
Sam Scott – Deputy Town Clerk
Sally Henley – Town Development Manager
Nigel Canham – Communications Advisor
Alex Robinson – Principal Administrator

124. **CHAIRMAN OF POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Nominations were received for the election of the Chairman of the Policy & Resources Committee for the year 2021/2022.

Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED that Councillor David Corney-Walker be elected Chairman of the Policy & Resources Committee for the year 2021/2022.

125. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Ryan Hall and Colin Parker.

126. **VICE-CHAIRMAN OF POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Nominations were received for the appointment of the Vice-Chairman of the Policy & Resources Committee for the year 2021/2022.

Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs Karen Crout be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee for the year 2021/2022.

127. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 12th February 2020 were received and signed as a correct record.

128. **INTERESTS**

Councillors Mrs Carol Bunday and David Howe gave notice of their intention to declare an interest in Minute 131 below.

129. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

130. **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Councillors considered the Terms of Reference for the Policy and Resources Committee, previously circulated. Following consideration of the Terms of Reference, it was;

RESOLVED that the Terms of Reference for the Policy and Resources Committee, were hereby agreed and adopted, subject to minor amendment.

131. **REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Chairman invited Members to report on meetings with outside bodies.

A. Councillor Mrs Lesley Sheffield reported on the Citizens Advice Teignbridge, and made particular reference to the work undertaken during the COVID-19 Pandemic in raising the following key points:

- Vince Wilson Chief Officer, CAB had provided the last quarter report which outlined the caseload and the affects of the Pandemic;
- From the first lockdown the services provided by CAB Teignbridge moved to digital almost overnight; using alternative means such as email, WhatsApp and text to reach their clients;
- Face to face interviews are resuming for the most vulnerable clients but the service is still very restricted;
- Over the last 12 months the Newton Abbot branch has provided services for 1194 clients and whilst this is less than previous years the nature and complexity of enquiries had increased requiring repeated contact to reach a resolution;
- Overall the team enabled their clients to collectively receive £100,000 in income and this is inevitably spent and recirculated in the local economy which brings benefit to the wider community;
- The team had to train in new areas to answer enquiries on matters such as furlough and self-isolation in addition to the existing services provided;
- The CAB predicts a substantial rise in enquiries in relation to rising fuel tariffs, the lifting of suspended evictions and the adjustments to Universal Credit;
- The work of the volunteers is invaluable, very few have left the service in Newton Abbot (despite reducing numbers elsewhere) and many have worked through the Pandemic without taking a break.

Councillor Sheffield, who herself is a CAT volunteer, recorded that Citizens Advice Teignbridge were very grateful for the £3000 funding from the Town Council which amounted to 5% of the running costs and had contributed to the £100,000 income achieved for clients in Newton Abbot. Councillor Sheffield concluded her report by noting that the investment made by the Town Council represented good value for money.

B. Councillor Mike Joyce reported on the Chamber of Trade noting that he was pleased to see that the organisation was looking to increase membership and revitalise its standing in the town for the benefit of local businesses.

C. Councillor Mrs Carol Bunday reported on the Courtenay Centre and its new business partnership with the Buckland Centre and CIC. The new business management team were working hard to increase bookings and improve the community facilities available to local groups and organisations.

D. Councillor Mike Hocking reported on his recent meeting as Board Member of DALC, the County Committee had met to consider the implications of the Government's Levelling Up initiative which is due to form part of a White Paper on Devolution later in the autumn. Councillor Hocking noted concerns raised among DALC Members that Principal Authorities had not sought to include Town and Parish Councils in the consultation process. In addition, Councillor Hocking noted that Ilfracombe had declared a Housing Emergency and had sought DALC support in lobbying Government for assistance. The Town Clerk echoed Councillor Hocking's concerns at the lack of involvement of Town and Parish Councils as he too had written to the County Officer seeking advice and support in ensuring that Local Councils would be represented in the consideration of Devolvement.

The Chairman thanked Councillors Mrs L Sheffield, M Joyce, Mrs C Bunday, and M Hocking for their updates to Members.

131. **CCTV – NEWTON ABBOT**

The Chairman referred to the Position Statement as prepared by NAST (Newton Abbot Security Trust) previously circulated and noted that it provided a useful summary of the work of NAST in the town and the increasing demand for its services among neighbouring towns and parishes in Teignbridge. The Chairman invited the Town Clerk to update Members on the regulatory requirements for running CCTV in the town.

The Town Clerk referred to the publication from the Surveillance Camera Commissioner, Facing the Camera, which forms the Code of Practice for the use of CCTV under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. The Clerk reported that in order for the Police to use CCTV footage as evidence, NAST were required to confirm the Relevant Authority under section 33 of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. Given the Town Council's commitment to NAST and the services it provides to Newton Abbot, the Council could be the Relevant Authority. The Clerk also reported that it was the responsibility of the Police to ensure that systems used on their behalf are compliant with their statutory duties. Councillors sought clarification on the details of the regulatory requirements to ensure that NAST was compliant and to allow the service to be offered to the Principal Highway Authority. Councillors queried if there would be any implications for the Town Council in adopting the role of Relevant Authority and requested that advice be sought from the Police in confirming the statutory requirements.

Following a lengthy discussion, it was:

RESOLVED that at the Meeting of the Full Council on 22nd September 2021 it be **recommended** that Newton Abbot Town Council be the Relevant Authority under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 Sec. 33 subject to the Police providing confirmation that this would satisfy the requirements of their statutory duties and would not adversely implicate the Town Council in any future legal proceedings where CCTV footage was provided by NAST as evidence.

Councillors Mrs Bunday and Howe having previously declared an interest took part in the discussion but did not vote.

132. NEWTON'S PLACE PROJECT – UPDATE

The Chairman invited the Town Clerk to provide a verbal update on the Newton's Place Project. The Town Clerk confirmed that there had been no further update on the situation regarding the former construction firm Pollards, but he was pleased to report that all the major defects had now been completed with the exception of two areas which were scheduled for later in the autumn.

The Clerk referred to a press release issued earlier in the day which outlined the tremendous numbers of visitors to the Museum since re-opening in May 2021 and despite the Government restrictions almost 3,000 visitors had been through the doors and had been hugely positive about their experience. The Councillors recorded their sincere thanks to the Museum team and volunteers for their hard work and dedication to make it such a success.

RESOLVED that the verbal update provided by the Town Clerk be hereby, noted.

133. POLICIES

The Chairman introduced the policy documents, previously circulated. Members noted that the first policy had been revised as part of the annual review and the second was a new policy to ensure the Town Council and Museum was compliant in adopting safeguarding principles as part of activities held at Newton's Place. Following a review of the policy documents among Members it was;

RESOLVED that the Policies in relation to;

- (a) Fixed Asset Depreciation;
- (b) Safeguarding; be hereby, approved and adopted.

134. ACCOUNTS INCOME & EXPENDITURE

The Committee received and noted the Income and Expenditure statement for the Policy and Resources Committee, for the period 1st April – 31st July 2021. The Chairman noted that there had been a few questions in advance of the meeting and the RFO had responded directly on those and Members were invited to raise further questions in the meeting.

Following consideration, accordingly it was:

RESOLVED that the Income and Expenditure Statement for the period 1st April – 31st July 2021 for the Policy and Resources Committee be hereby approved and adopted.

135. LATE CORRESPONDENCE

None.

136. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be Wednesday 27th October 2021.

CHAIRMAN